

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 6, 14, 15 and 17 are currently amended and no claims have been added or canceled by way of this response. Thus, claims 1-18 are currently pending and presented for examination. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Response to Rejections Under Section 103:

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rossmann (USPN 5,474,421) in view of Ortolano (USPN 4,386,887).

The Examiner contends that the combination of Rossmann in view of Ortolano teaches Applicant's claimed invention. Applicant's respectfully disagree.

Applicant's amended claim 1 recites in part:

...**a titanium blade** ... and
a **support element** arranged between adjacent blades of the blade row **located approximately in the blade center region** and coupling the adjacent blades.

Applicant's amended claim 6 recites in part:

... wherein the **first and second blades are formed from titanium**; and
a **support element** located between the first rotating blade and the second rotating blade and **arranged approximately in the blade center region**, and adapted to couple the first rotating blade to the second rotating blade ...

Applicant's amended claim 15 recites in part:

... installing a **support element** between the first rotating blade and the second rotating blade, the **support element located approximately in the blade center region**;
coupling the first rotating blade to the second rotating blade; and
...
wherein the **first and second blades are formed from titanium**.

In contrast, Applicant's respectfully submit that the combination of Rossmann in view of Ortolano would result in a blade row comprising an alternating series of heavy weight and light weight blades, where the heavy weight blades are metallic and the light weight blades are ceramic as taught by Rossmann (Abstract and col. 6, lines 17-44). Furthermore, the blades would have a shroud arranged at the blade tip and several blades would be joined to a single shroud to

form blade groups. Adjacent blade groups would then be joined together at the shrouds by connectors as taught by Ortolando (col. 4, lines 46-55).

Specifically, claims 1, 6 and 15 recite **titanium blades** coupled to each other by a **supporting element** arranged essentially in a **blade center region**, and not alternating heavy/light metallic/composite blades arranged into blade groups at the blade tips by a shrouds where adjacent shrouds are joined by connectors.

In light of the above, Applicant's respectfully submit that the teachings of Rossman in view of Ortolando do not teach or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, and claims 1-18 are patentable. Therefore, Applicants request the Examiner withdraw the section 103 rejections and timely pass the application to allowance.

(Please proceed to the next page.)

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejections and timely pass the application to allowance. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address. Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this paper. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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